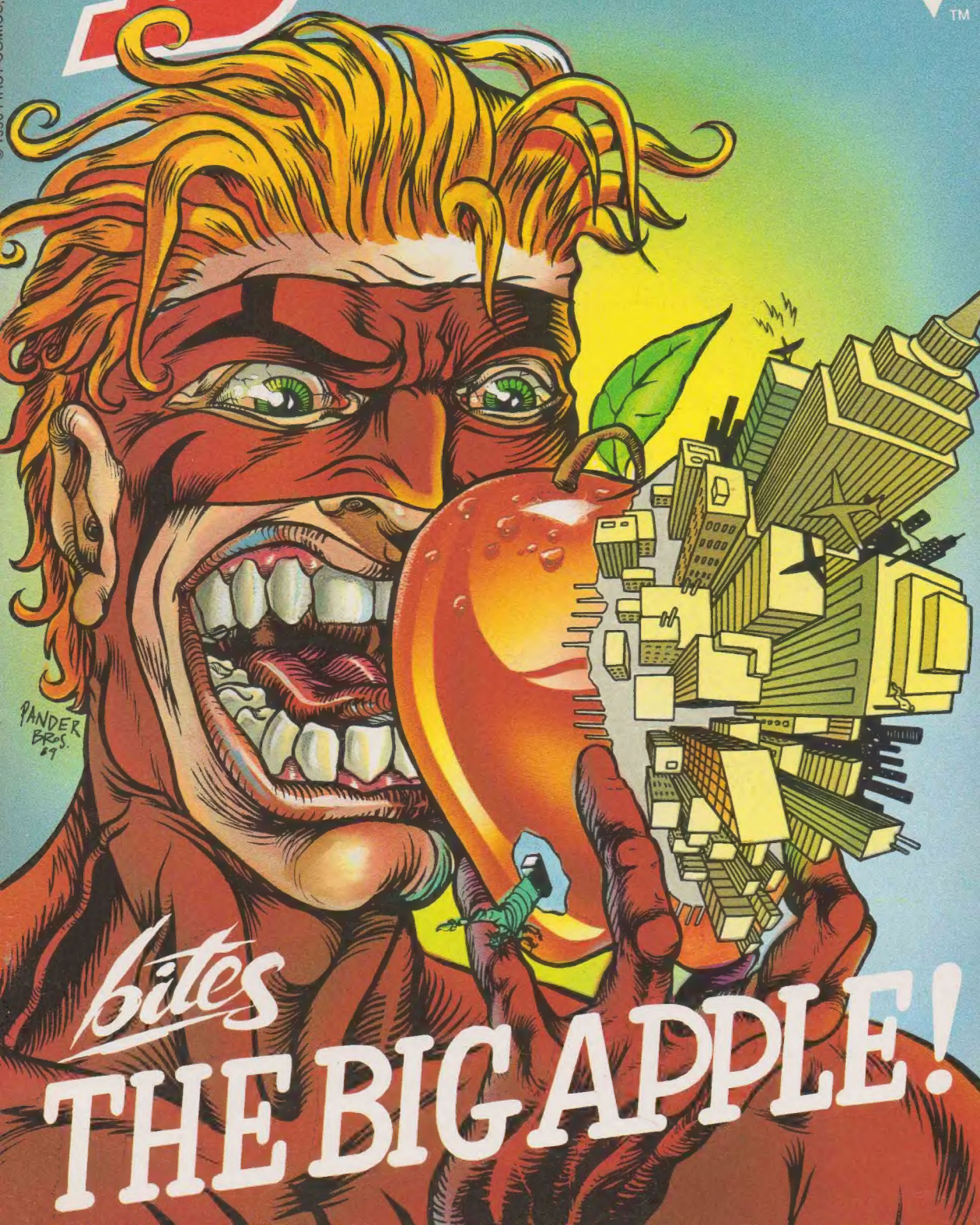


FIRST
COMICS
MAY 59 1990
\$1.95 \$2.45
CANADA

MIKE BARON • THE PANDER BROS.

BADGER

TM



bites
THE BIG APPLE!

BADGER™

CREATED BY MIKE BARON



A self-styled crime fighter who rides the highways and by-ways of America, the **Badger** metes out bloody justice to jaywalkers, ticket scalpers, indifferent teenaged fast-food clerks — in fact, *any-damn-body he feels like because he's CRAZY!*

Badger is just one side of **Norbert Sykes**, a Vietnam veteran with a personality problem: it's split seven ways. Nevertheless, Norbert almost always finds himself in a Badger state of mind.

Badger is a master of Shorin-ryu and dozens of other obscure, esoteric, arcane, not to mention abstruse martial arts. He can also talk to the animals — just like Dr. Doolittle. Only with better results.

Badger lives with **Ham the Weather Wizard** in a castle south of Barneveld, Wisconsin. Ham and Badger met while both were inmates at a state mental hospital. Through cunning and chicanery, Ham has amassed a considerable fortune.

Badger calls everyone Larry.

Last Issue: Badger went down under to race **Lamont** against the **Wombat's** Emu, **Emil**, but **Bloody Jack Moran** and **Spuds Grogan** were determined to make sure Badger never made it to the finish line. Wombat foiled their evil plan.

BADGER™ Vol. 1, No. 59, May 1990. Published by FIRST PUBLISHING, INC., OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 435 N. LaSalle, Chicago IL 60610. Published monthly. Copyright © 1990 First Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved. Price: \$1.95 in the U.S. Subscription rates for twelve issues: \$23.50 in the U.S., \$25.50 in Canada, and \$45.00 foreign rate. All payments must be in U.S. funds. The stories, incidents, and characters mentioned in this publication are entirely fictional. No actual persons, living or dead, without satiric content, are intended or should be inferred. The Badger, Ham, and all prominent characters featured in this issue are trademarks of First Publishing, Inc. Printed in the U.S.A. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to **Badger**, c/o First Publishing, Inc., 435 N. LaSalle, Chicago IL 60610.



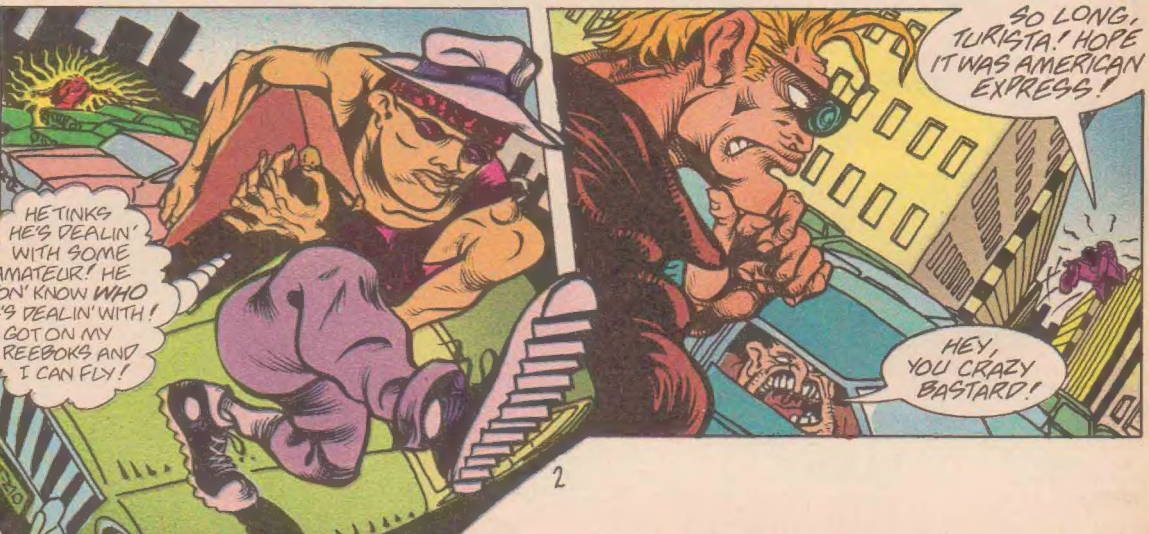
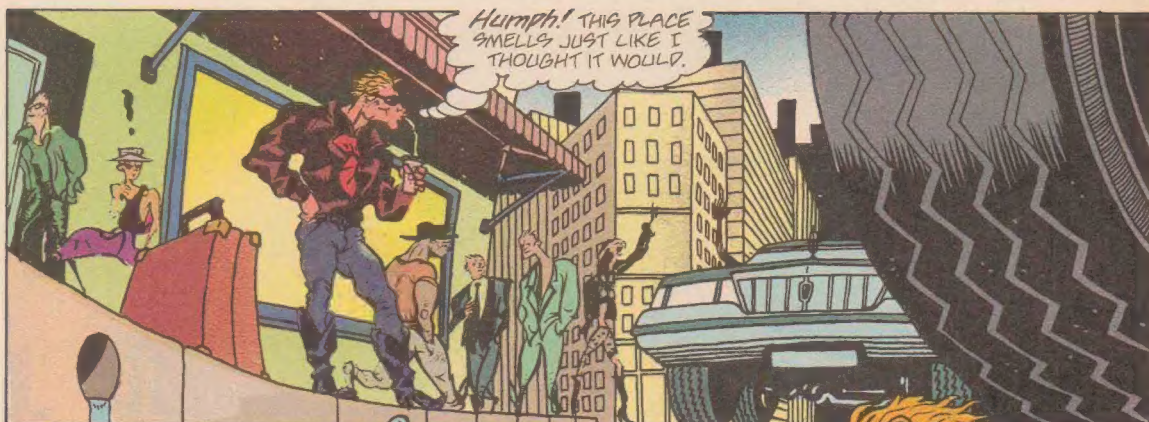
mike
BARON
WRITER

jacob - arnold
PANDER
ARTISTS

paul
FRICKE
LETTERER

ian
TETRAULT
COLORIST

bob
GARCIA
EDITOR





K-PUNK

I AIN'T NO JACK IN THE BOX, LARRY!

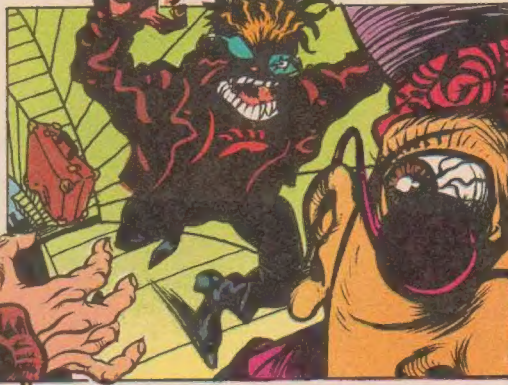


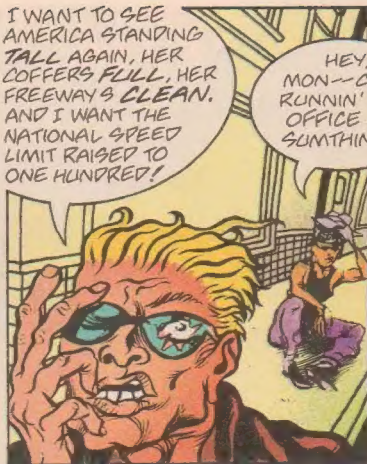
DOUBLE @##\$%! MUST BE SOME KINDA RUNNIN' FOOL!



TAKE IT, SUCKER!

IT'S NOT THE UNDERWEAR, IT'S THE PRINCIPLE!





I'LL HUFF
AND I'LL PUFF
AND I'LL BUST
YOUR FACE!

NO, MON, CHOO
GOIN' 'BOUT THIS
ALL WRONG...

COME
ON, MON!
MAKE YOUR
MOVE! LET'S
SEE YOUR
STUFF!

GETTIN'
SO YOU CAN'T
STRIP A CAR IN
PEACE.

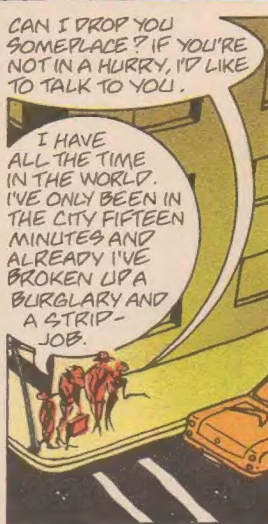
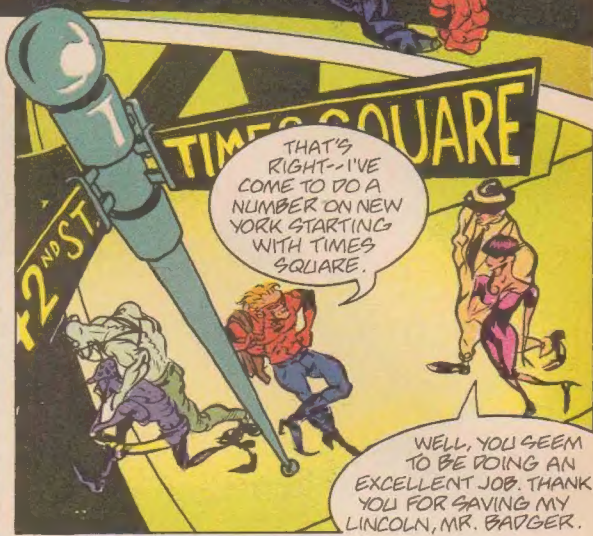
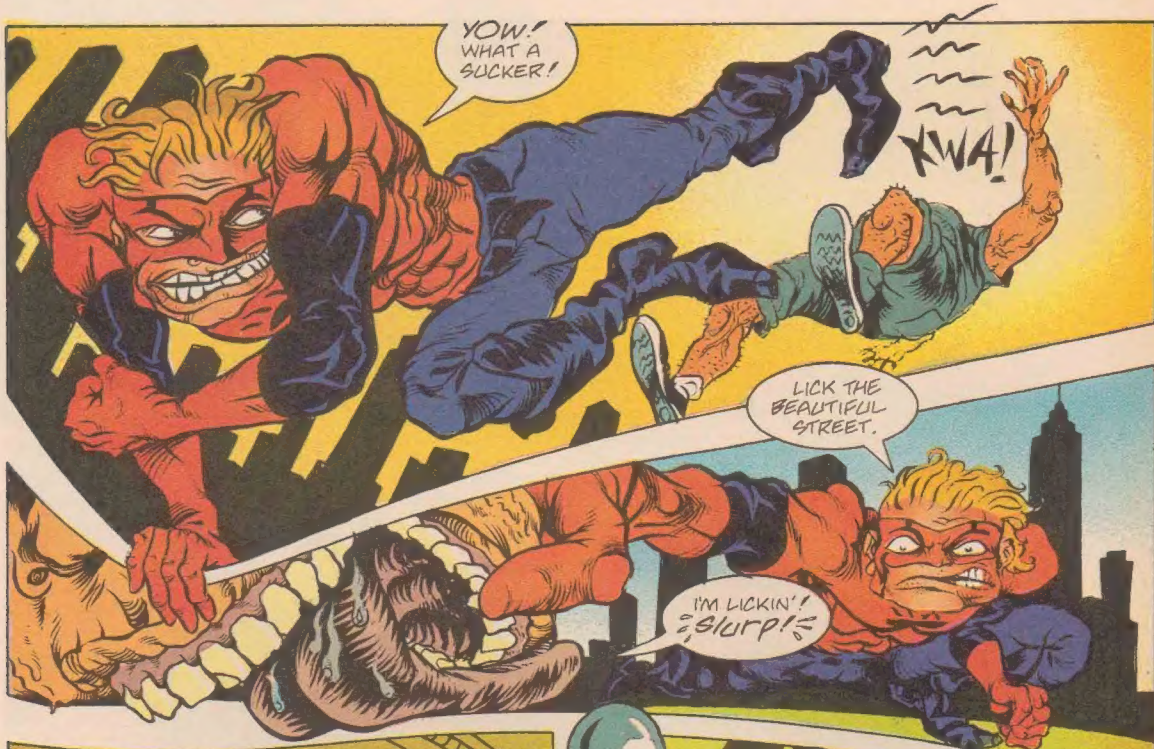
IT'S ALL
SO PAINFULLY
OBVIOUS TO ME--THERE'S
NOTHING WRONG WITH NEW YORK
THAT A SOUND THRASHING, A
HOT BATH, AND ABOUT \$20
BILLION IN GUARANTEED
FEDERAL LOANS
WOULDN'T CURE!

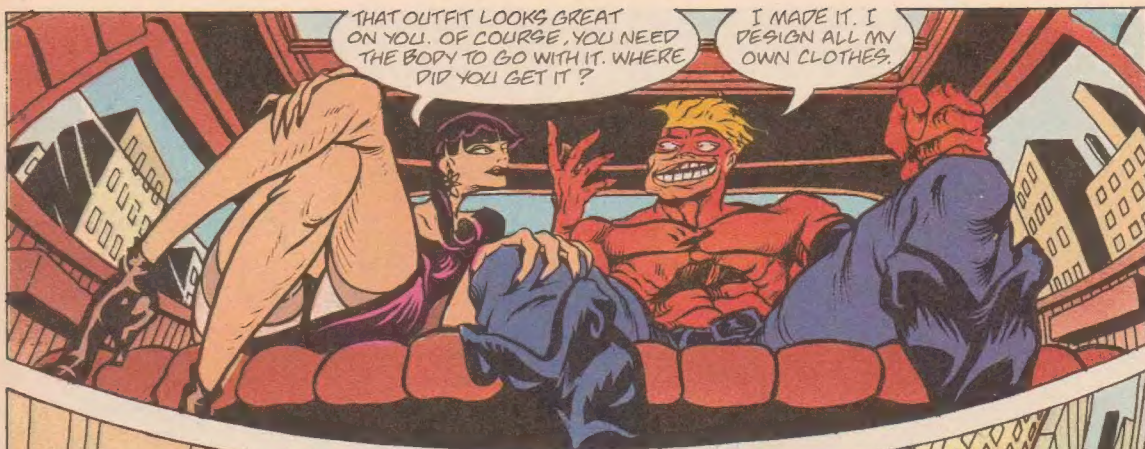
YAH!
HEY PACO
--HELP
ME!

YOW!
NATIVE
MUTANT
AMERICANS!

KISS
THE LOVELY
STREET!

WHAAM





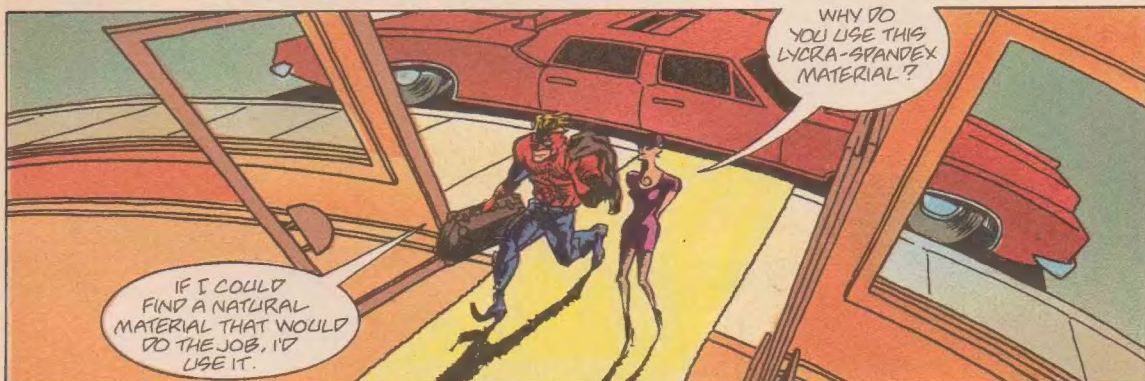
THAT OUTFIT LOOKS GREAT ON YOU. OF COURSE, YOU NEED THE BODY TO GO WITH IT. WHERE DID YOU GET IT?

I MADE IT. I DESIGN ALL MY OWN CLOTHES.



REALLY? I LOVE THE LITTLE EMBROIDERED CLAW...DO YOU DO THIS BY HAND?

YES...LET ME SHOW YOU SOME THINGS I HAVE IN MY BAG...



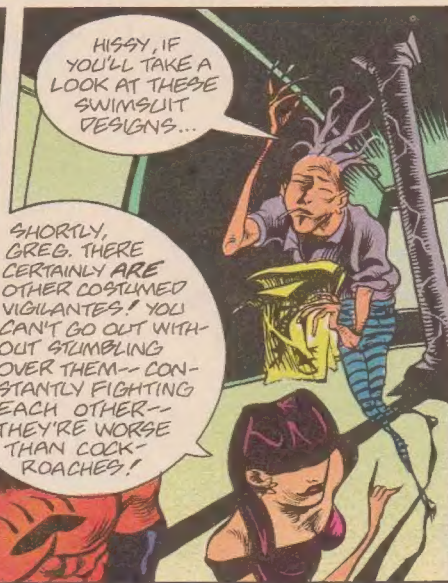
WHY DO YOU USE THIS LYCRA-SPANDEX MATERIAL?

IF I COULD FIND A NATURAL MATERIAL THAT WOULD DO THE JOB, I'D USE IT.



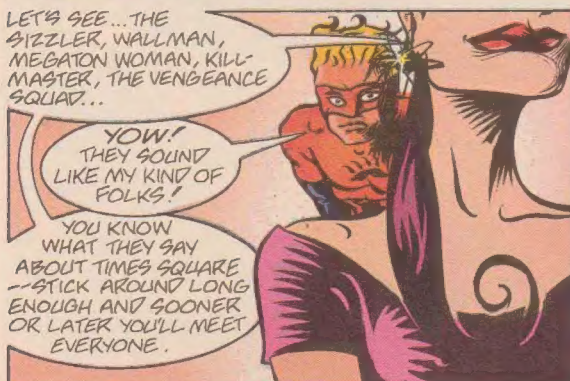
I KNOW SEVERAL DOZEN COSTUMED VIGILANTES WHO WOULD USE IT TOO.

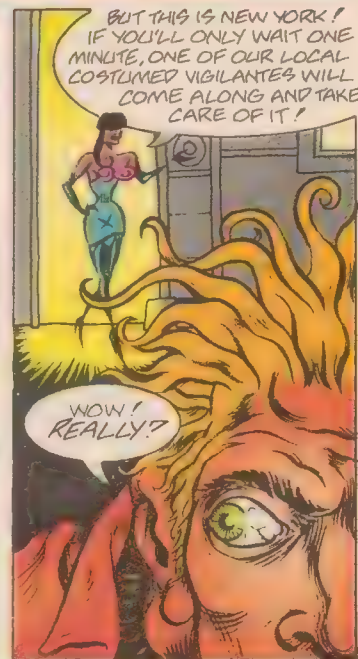
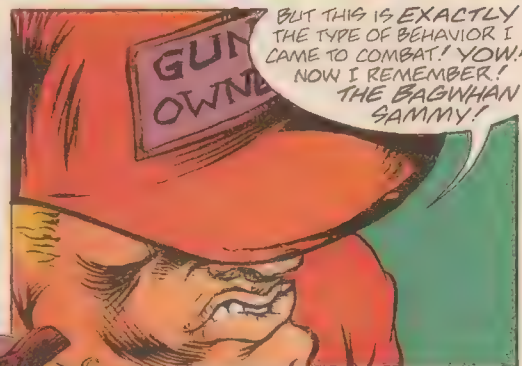
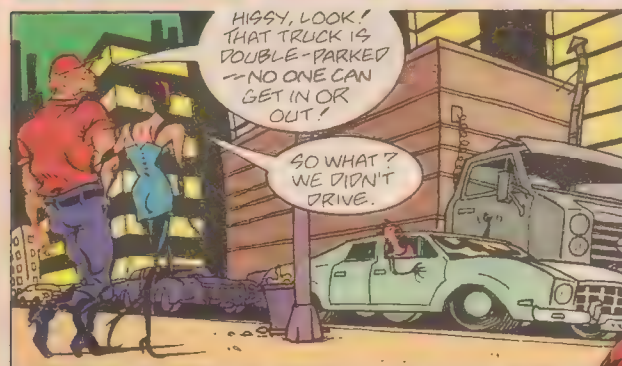
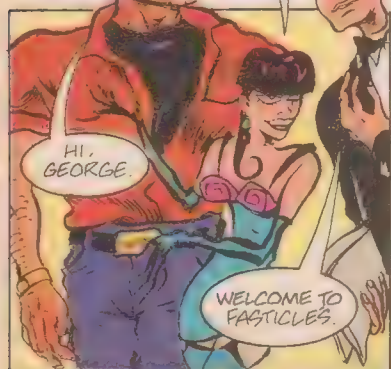
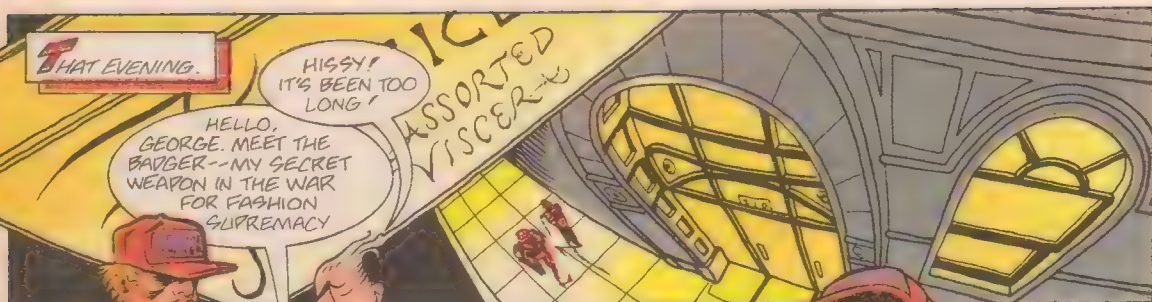
WHAT?? THERE ARE OTHER COSTUMED VIGILANTES?

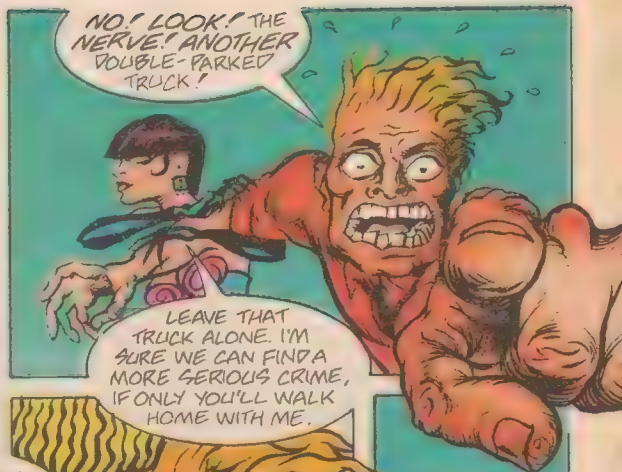


HISSEY, IF YOU'LL TAKE A LOOK AT THESE SWIMSUIT DESIGNS...

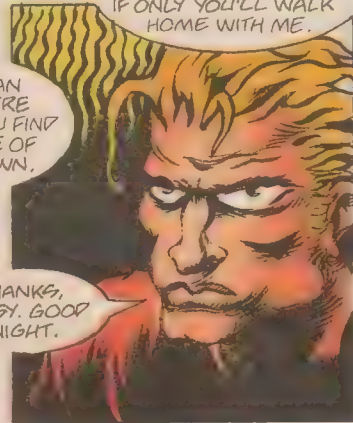
SHORTLY, GREG. THERE CERTAINLY ARE OTHER COSTUMED VIGILANTES. YOU CAN'T GO OUT WITHOUT STUMBLING OVER THEM-- CONSTANTLY FIGHTING EACH OTHER-- THEY'RE WORSE THAN COCK-ROACHES!







ALAS, NO CRIME OCCURS. HISSY INSTALLS BARDER IN A SPARE BEDROOM.





First PERSON SINGULAR

1990: A CLASSIC YEAR FOR FIRST!

I remember the one thing that always irritated me about the old Classics Illustrated was that while the covers were so beautifully painted, the inside pages were so boring. I always thought that they would have been great if only the inside art matched the covers, and if Jack Kirby

All together, these four books represent the best work in comics today. We're proud to be the publishers of the new Classics Illustrated, and when you see these books, you'll know why.

could have drawn all of them.

I'm past the Jack Kirby part, but I still believe that an adaptation should match the promise of the cover, and I'm glad to say that our new Classics Illustrated books do just that.

Just before I sat down to write this column, Production Manager Mike McCormick came in with a full set of unbound signatures for the first four Classics Illustrated titles, *Moby Dick*, *Through the Looking-Glass*, *The Raven and Other Poems*, and *Great Expectations*.

I immediately pushed everything aside and looked through the results of our months of labor.

To say the least, I am thoroughly blown away by all of these books, each done in a distinct comic style. Bill Sienkiewicz's *Moby Dick* has no word balloons, only captions, and is fully painted. The art perfectly brings home the dark, hallucinatory effect of this masterpiece. The drama, the history, the scope of the tale are heightened by Bill's brilliant style.

Great Expectations is done in a more standard comic form by the talented Rick Geary. In *Great Expectations*, you will see his love for the era expressed in this, his first

color comic set in Victorian England.

Edgar Allan Poe's *The Raven and Other Poems* is a triumph on the part of a master. Gahan Wilson uses his illustrations in full conjunction with the unaltered text and conveys a sense of movement, time, and place that beautifully complements the poetry itself. This is not to be missed.

Finally, Kyle Baker's *Through the Looking-Glass* is a fun, modern look at the old classic, with the comedic exaggerations aptly portrayed.

All together, these four books represent the best work in comics today. We're proud to be the publishers of the new Classics Illustrated, and when you see these books, you'll know why.

You won't see a lot of the national press given to the guys who put this project together from top to bottom. So, since I have some space, and they deserve lots of praise, I'll go at it.

Honors go to the Classics Illustrated Editorial Director, Wade Roberts for making hours of phone calls talking to writers and artists,

enduring endless meetings, and even holding on through personal injury to produce the finest in graphic novels today.

Next is Alex Wald, who created the look of the new Classics Illustrated, and fought for the best work from all. Mike McCormick went through trials and tribulations, and trips to Ohio, to assure the best reproduction in the industry. Next, hats off to Stephen Lau, the Director of Classics Illustrated. Stephen essentially created an entirely new division of First. The folks in Mike's production department put it all together flawlessly: Noreen Ryan, Rich Powers, Holly Blessen, and Tomoko Yoshida. Kudos to Traffic Manager, Rich Markow who managed these books' schedules and has the gray hair to prove it. Kurt Goldzung and Craig Kunaschk have done an incredible job of publicizing the line. And finally, there's our publisher who fought the odds to bring this project to First, Rick Obadia.

All these folks make the First choice, the best choice. Count on it!

— Bob Garcia

FIRST IN JANUARY

1 Grimjack #70: Flint Henry's back, and Grimjack is up to his neck in trouble. By John Ostrander, Flint Henry, and Tom Baxa.

1 Hammer of God #4: It is Judah's final showdown with Rotax, president of the Adjudicator's Guild. By Roger Salick and Steve Epting. Series co-plotted by Mike Baron and Roger Salick.

1 Nexus #68: Stan has killed forty-three Elvonic, and Elvon demands his head. By Mike Baron, Luke McDonnell, and Jay Geldhof.

1 Nexus Legends #13: Horatio has stopped his dreams, but at what cost? By Mike Baron, Steve Rude, and Eric Shanower. Cover by Les Dorscheid.

1 Badger #59: Badger goes to New York, and takes a walk on the wild side. By Mike Baron and The Pander Brothers.

1 Dreadstar #54: Vanth must stop Palafox... and Junior? By Peter David, Angel Medina, and Bob Dvorak. Plus the final chapter of *Pawns* by Jim Starlin and Daina Graziunas.

1 Whisper #36: The penultimate chapter of *Whisper*, as Diane is set up by the drug lord, Carnicero. By Steven Grant and Vince Giarrano.

1 Sable #27: In this final issue, Sable finds out who kidnapped his daughter. By Steven Kaye, Peter Krause, and Dan Schaefer.

1 Mike Grell's Sable #3: Re-presenting *John Sable, Freelance* #3, by Mike Grell. New cover by Tony Akins.

1 Classics Illustrated #1: The Raven and Other Poems. Edgar Allan Poe's mysterious verses illustrated by Gahan Wilson.

1 Classics Illustrated #2: Great Expectations. Charles Dickens' Victorian masterpiece is adapted by Rick Geary.

1 Classics Illustrated #3: Through the Looking-Glass. Lewis Carroll's wonderful fantasy adapted by Kyle Baker.

1 Classics Illustrated #4: Moby Dick. Herman Melville's classic tale is adapted by Bill Sienkiewicz.

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435 N. LaSalle, Chicago, IL 60610

Rick Obadia, Publisher
Kathy Kotsivas, Operations Dir.
Kurt Goldzung, Sales Director
Alex Wald, Art Director
Bob Garcia, Senior Editor
Rich Markow, Traffic Manager
Mike McCormick, Production Mgr.

Beauty and the Beast

BOOK II

Night of Beauty

Written and illustrated by Wendy Pini.

Vincent and Catherine

have stood side by side

against every kind of

danger...or so

they thought.



Now, their love must face

the ultimate test — for

sometimes, it is only by

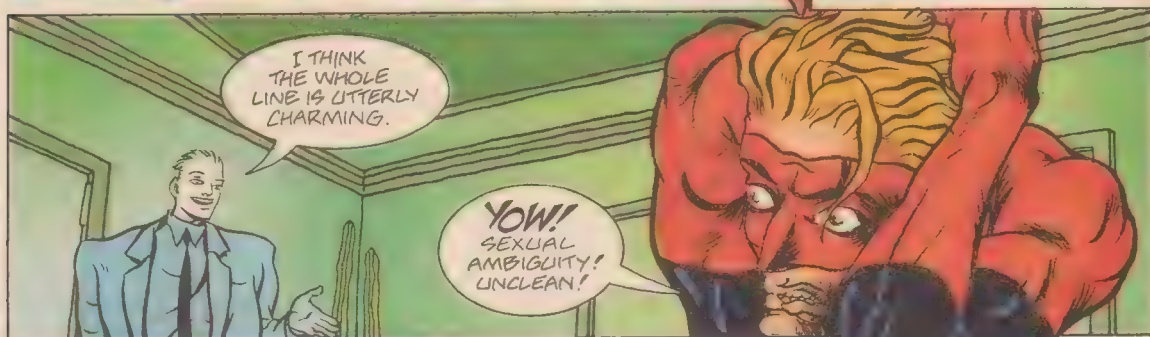
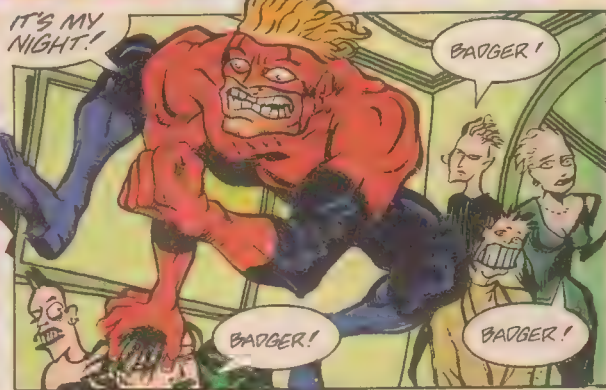
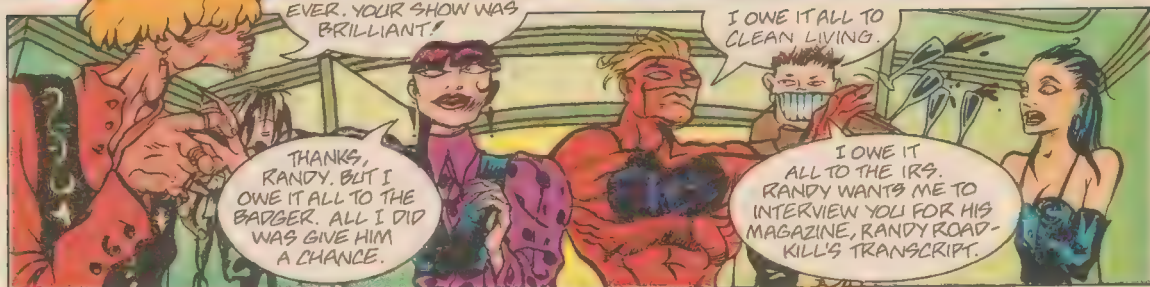
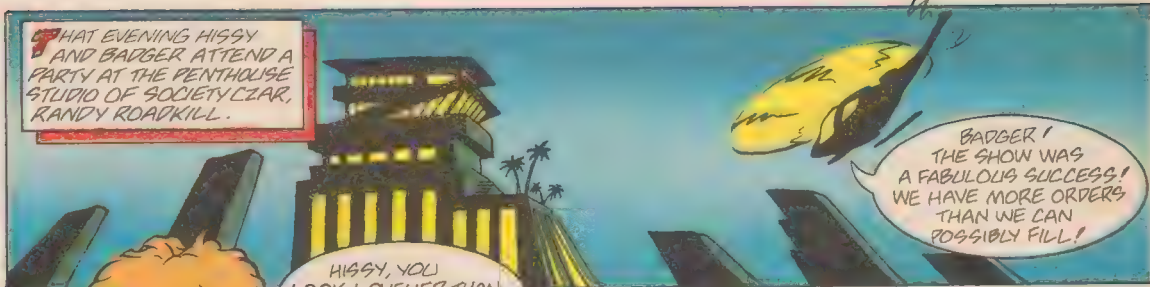
braving a sea of darkness

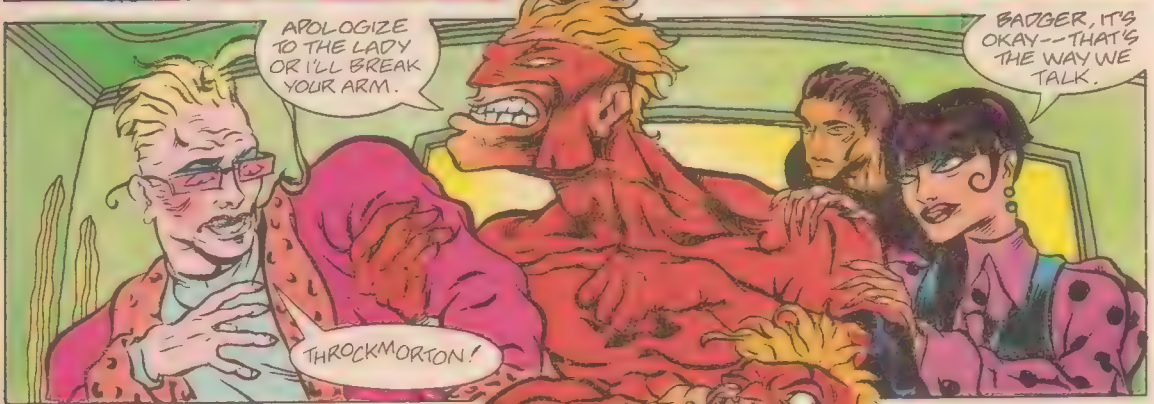
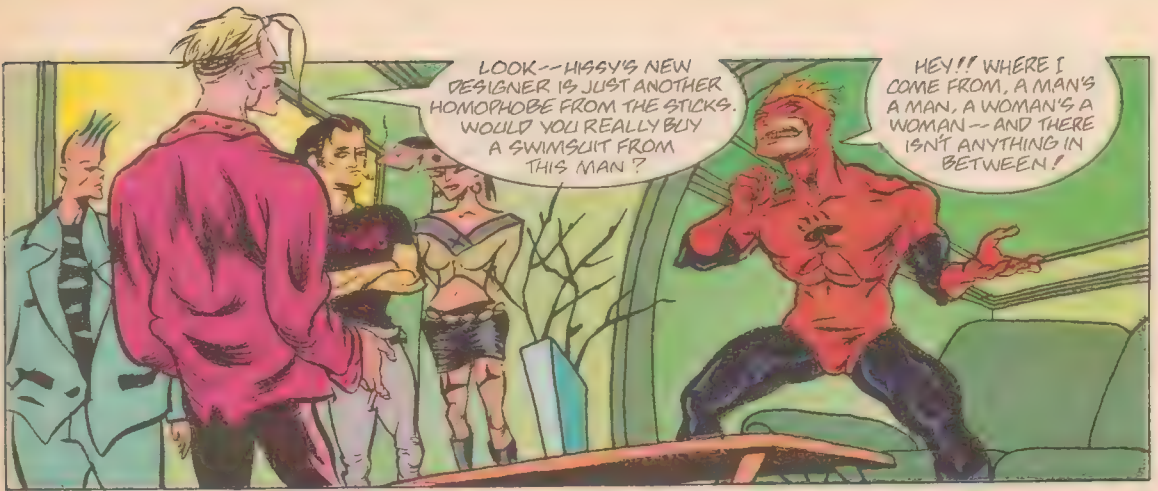
that one can find the

brightest light.

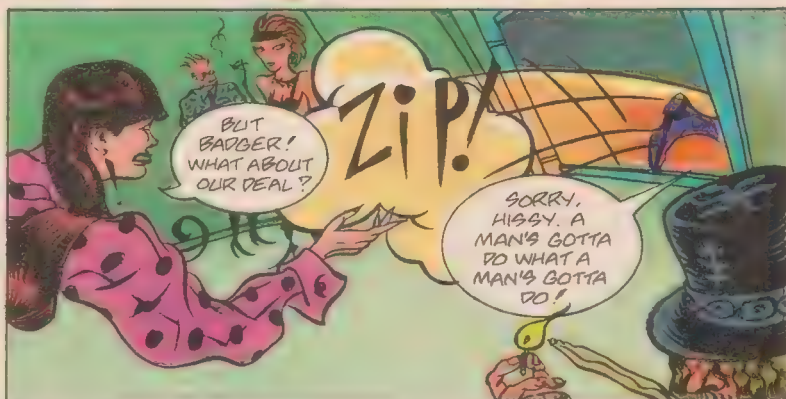
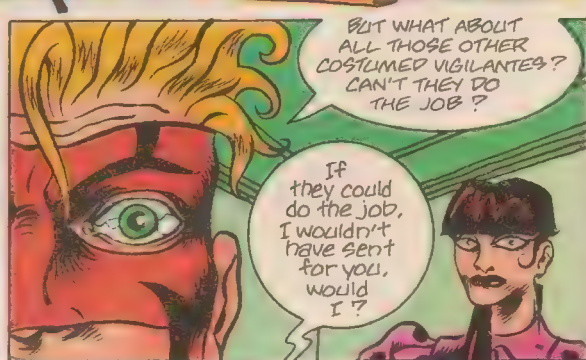
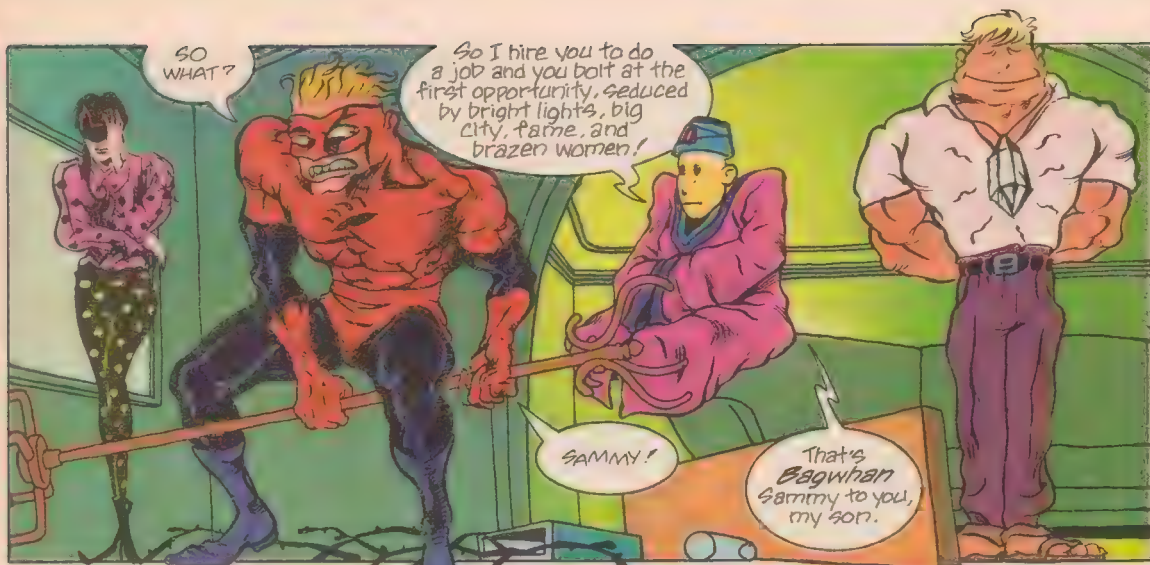
A tale of love and loss.

Coming in March from First Publishing.

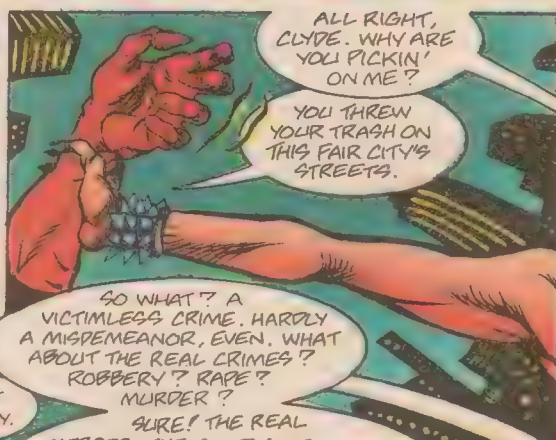
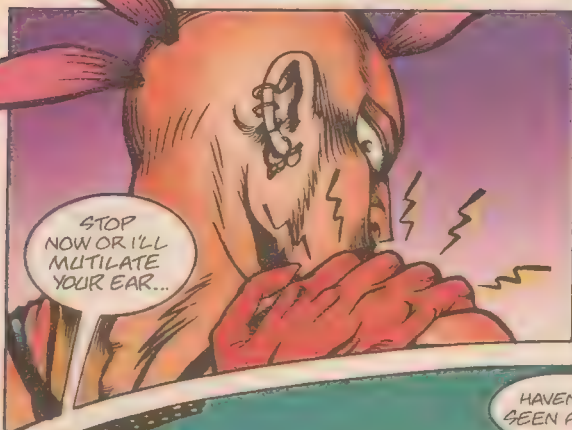


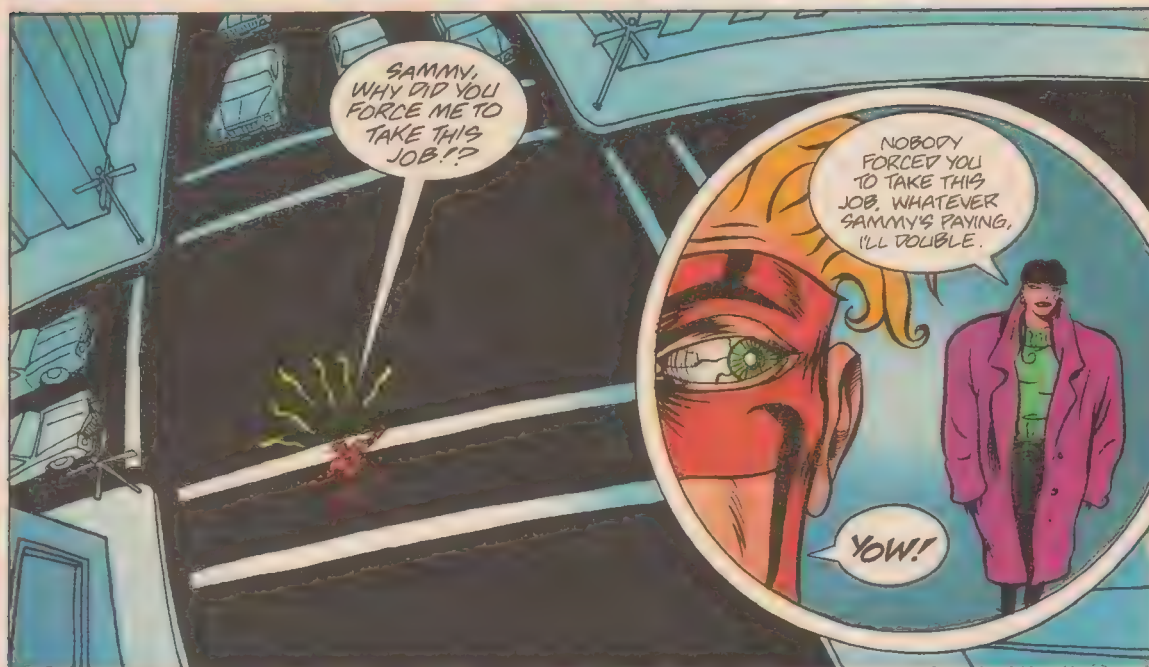
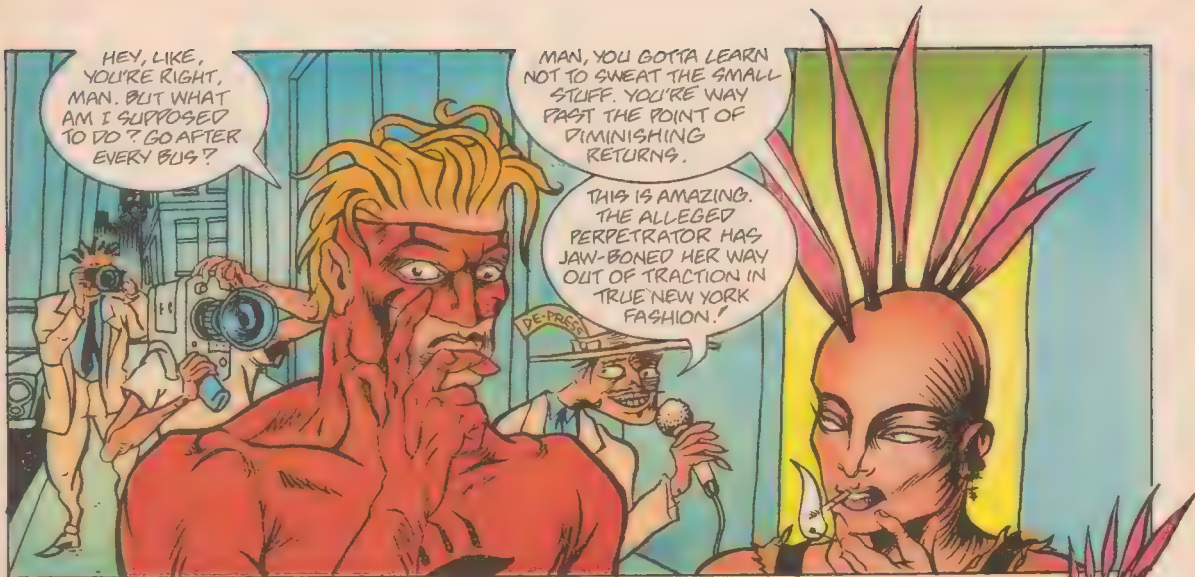






AND SO THE BADGER RETURNS TO TIMES SQUARE, THIS TIME ACCOMPANIED BY MEMBERS OF THE MEDIA.





WOOTIE!

The Nexus Family Portrait



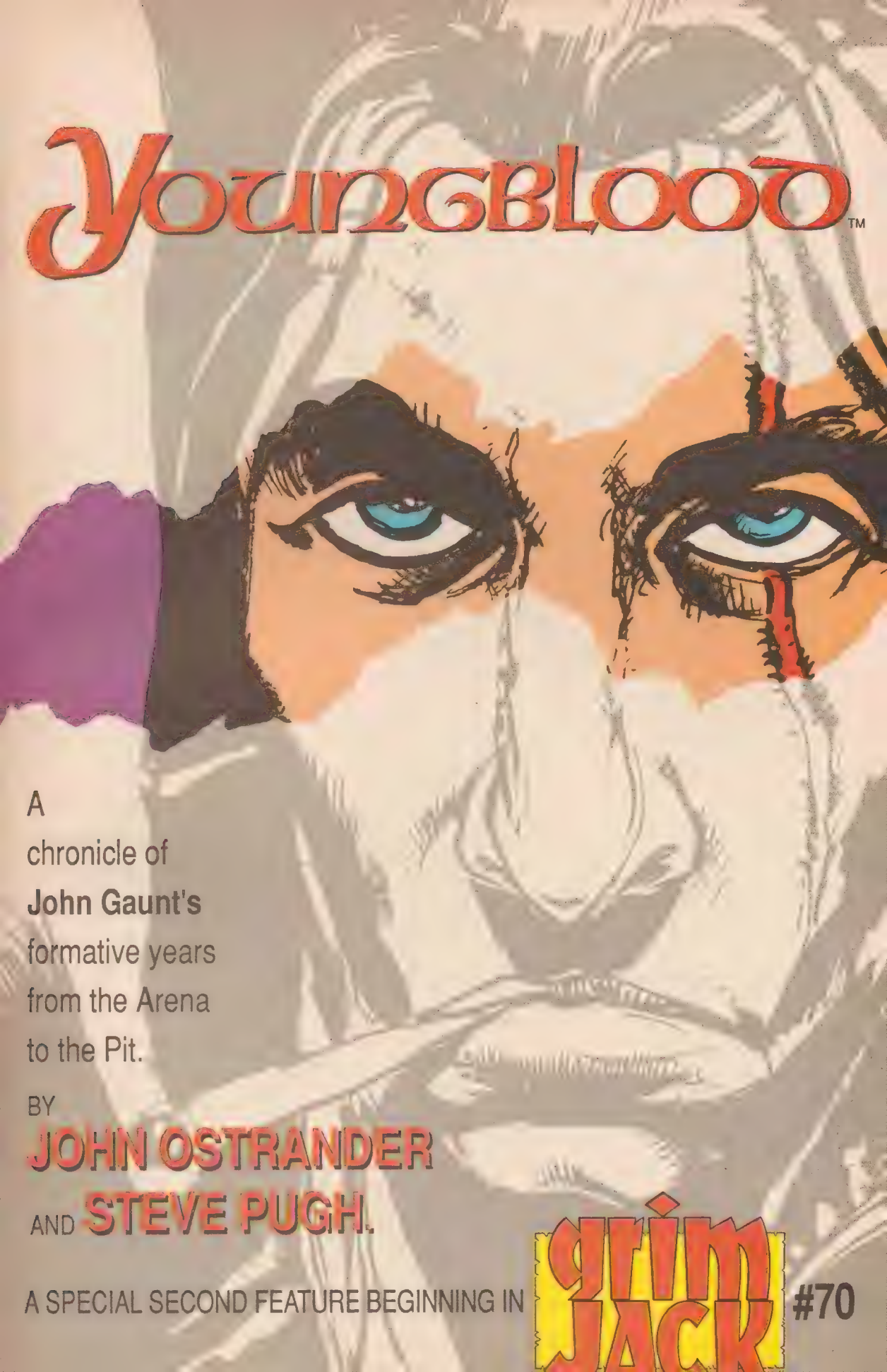
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A full-color, 22" x 28" poster by

Steve Rude

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YoungBlood™

A
chronicle of
John Gaunt's
formative years
from the Arena
to the Pit.

BY

JOHN OSTRANDER

AND **STEVE PUGH.**

A SPECIAL SECOND FEATURE BEGINNING IN

**grim
JACK**

#70

THE BADGER
GEEKS ADVICE.

THAT'S THE
SITUATION, HAM. I
CAN CLEAN UP TIMES
SQUARE FOR A MIL OR
BECOME THE NEW CZAR
OF FASHION FOR TWO
MIL. WHICH SHALL
IT BE?

NEITHER!
GET YOUR BUTT
BACK HERE! I
HAVE A SERIOUS
VANDALISM PROBLEM!
IF YOU'RE NOT BACK
IN TWO DAYS I'LL BE
FORCED TO DEAL
WITH THE RASCALS
MYSELF.

BUT HAM!
I HAVE THE
OPPORTUNITY
TO MAKE A REAL
FASHION
STATEMENT!

TWO DAYS,
SIR!

ALL RIGHT, HAM
--HYPOTHETICALLY,
WHICH SHOULD
I DO?

OH, WELL,
FOR THE SAKE
OF SUPPOSITION,
BY ALL MEANS DO
THE FASHION. THIS
BAGNHAM SAMMY
SOUNDS LIKE
A REAL
TWINKIE.

BUT
REMEMBER
WHAT I SAID!
TWO WEEKS!

WELL?

COME ON...
WE'VE GOT A
NEW FALL LINE
TO DESIGN!

YAY!



UPSTATE LIES THE PALATIAL
WORLD HEADQUARTERS OF
BAGWHAN SAMMY, SPIRITUAL
LEADER TO 350,000 BAGWHAN
HUINKAPAS.

The Badger has
deserted his sacred
mission, Owen
my son.

IT'S A REAL
SHOCKER,
BAGWHAN.

Owen, I want you
and Boris my son to go
back to New York and
teach the Badger the
error of his ways...

It's a
terrible
thing, this
spiritual erosion
that makes a good
man like the Badger
desert my calling for
the world of
vanity and
fleshly pleasure.

THAT'S
GOSPEL,
BAGWHAN.

AMEN,
MIGHTY
BAGWHAN.

I say
it is a
terrible
thing...

When the
man I have
personally chosen
to rid the city's streets
of scum and contumely
turns his back on
righteousness!

HIT IT,
BAGWHAN.

But I
must not
let the
Badger's
weakness
disrupt my
harmony.

DON'T
LET HIM
GET TO YOU,
BOG.

The
Badger's
made a lot
of enemies
in his short
time here.
Form a
coalition
with them
and bring
the
Badger
low.

YOU
GOT IT,
BOG.

HE'S
HISTORY.

**BADGER BURNS
THE MIDNIGHT
OIL.**

THIS STRAPLESS
EVENING DRESS SHOULD
CAUSE A FEW
RIPPLES...

NEXT--THE
NECKLINE
CHALLENGE--
A DRESS IN THE
SHAPE OF
A KLEIN
BOTTLE...

I NEED
A BALANS
CHAIR!

THAT'S IT, GANG.
I'M EXHAUSTED!
GOODNIGHT.

WE'LL BE
BACK IN THE
MORNING TO
TAKE A LOOK AT
THE MOCK-
UPS.

WHERE'S
ELMO?

OH, LET'S
WALK--IT'S A
BEAUTIFUL
NIGHT.

YOU AND
NEW YORK
HAVE WON
ME OVER,
HISSY.

I'M SO
GLAD YOU
CAN SEND FOR
YOUR THINGS--
STAY WITH ME
UNTIL YOU CAN
FIND A PLACE
OF YOUR
OWN.

SAY WHAT?? I'M A COUNTRY
BOY! I LOVE NEW YORK, BUT I
WOULDN'T WANT TO LIVE HERE.
BESIDES--
I THINK I
LEFT A
WIFE
BEHIND.

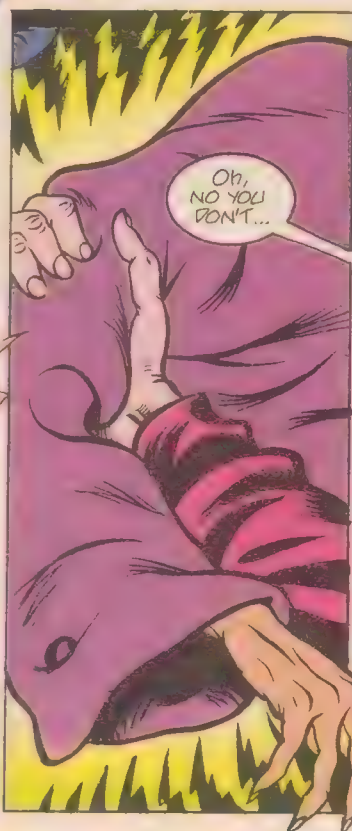
BUT
NEW YORK
IS THE CENTER
OF THE
WORLD!

THAT'S NOT
TRUE--THE CENTER
OF THE WORLD IS
MITCHELL, SOUTH
DAKOTA.

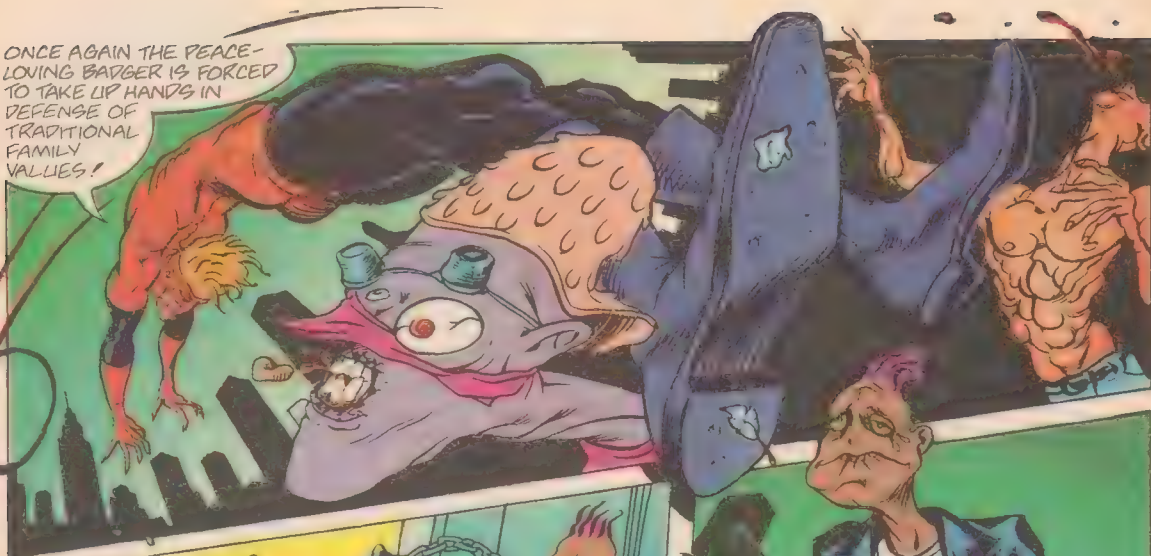
BADGER,
MON! GOT TO
TELL CHOD,
THE WORD
IS OUT!

STREETWISE!
¿QUE PASA?

THERE'S A WHOLE
ARMY OF MEAN MEN
COMBIN' THE STREETS
IN COMBAT BOOTS
LOOKIN' TO STOMP
YOUR BUTT!



ONCE AGAIN THE PEACE-
LOVING BARDER IS FORCED
TO TAKE UP HANDS IN
DEFENSE OF
TRADITIONAL
FAMILY
VALUES!



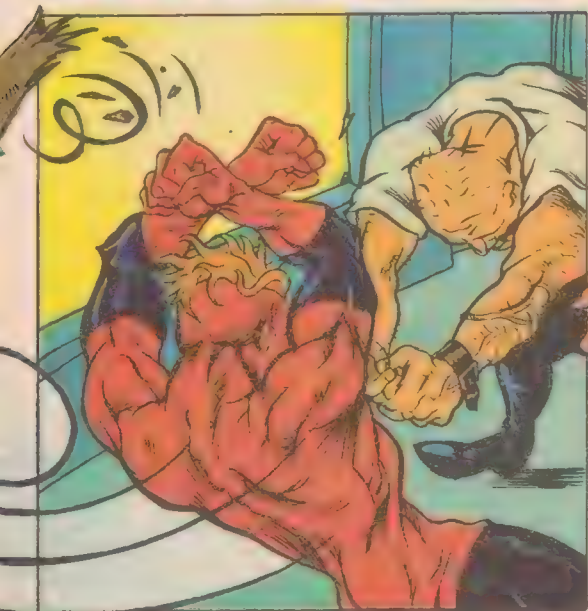
IS THAT
WHAT YOU MEAN
BY TRADITIONAL
FAMILY VALUES?



SORRY--NO
PUNCHLINE.

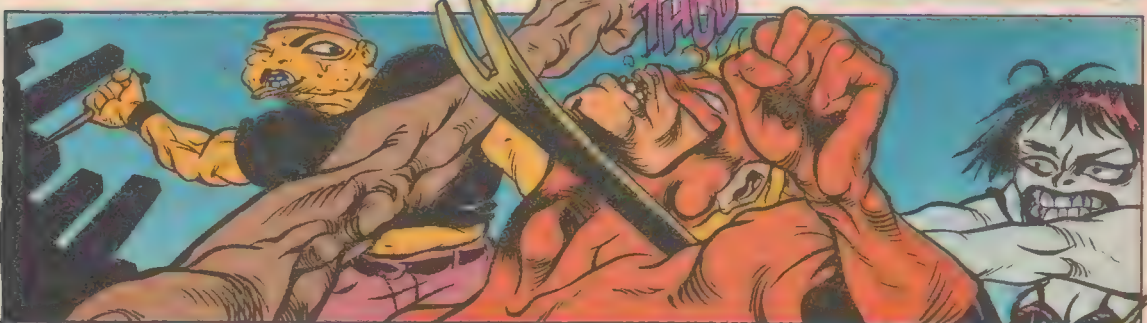
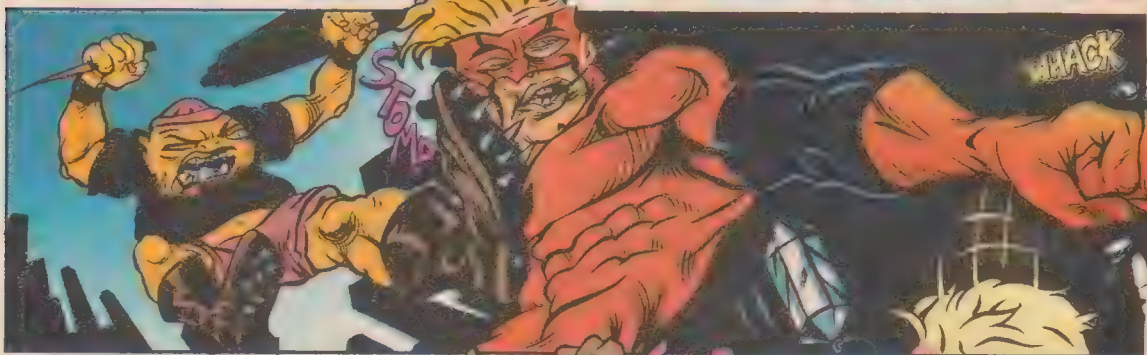


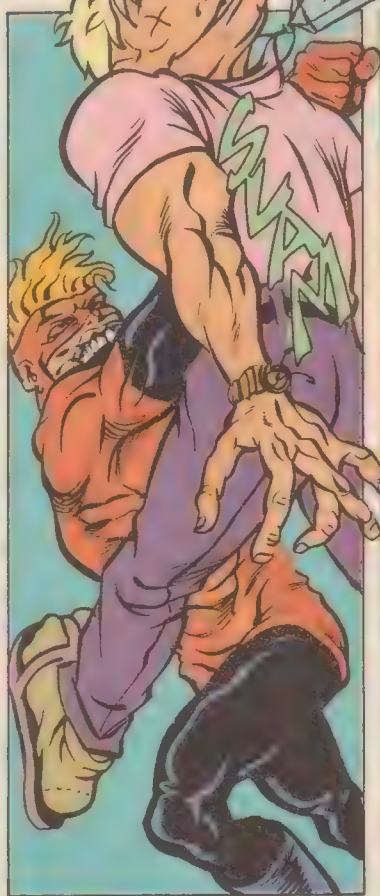
I GOTTA
PUNCHLINE!



YOU GOT A
DISLOCATED
ELBOW!



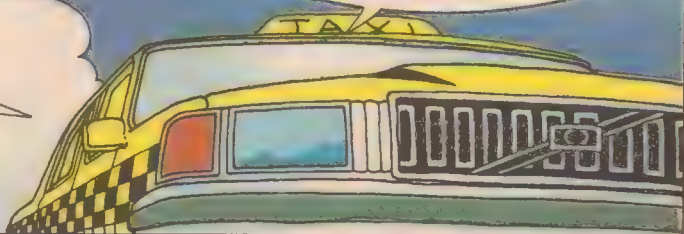




AND SO, AFTER MANY ADVENTURES TOO SPECTACULAR TO RELATE, THE BADGER MUST AT LAST RETURN TO THE DAIRY STATE.

BUT HISSY-- COULDN'T I SEND THE DESIGNS IN OVER THE FAX?

I'M SORRY, BADGER. IF YOU'RE NOT IN NEW YORK YOU JUST CAN'T BE PART OF THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF FASHION. BUT YOUR STUNNING CONTRIBUTION WILL AFFECT STYLE FOR YEARS TO COME. OR AT LEAST A WEEK.

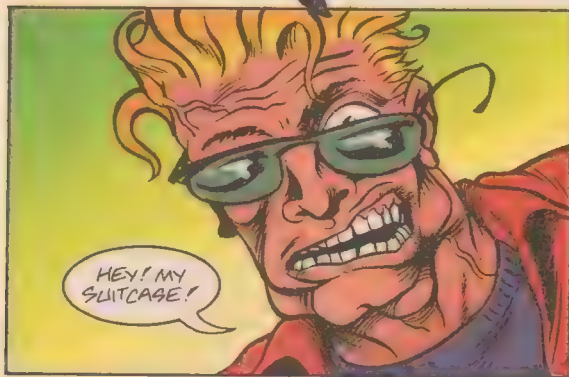


WELL, HISSY, IT'S BEEN SWELL. YOU MUST COME VISIT US IN BARNEVELD.

I'D LOVE TO. YOU'D BETTER HUSTLE IF YOU WANT TO CATCH YOUR PLANE.

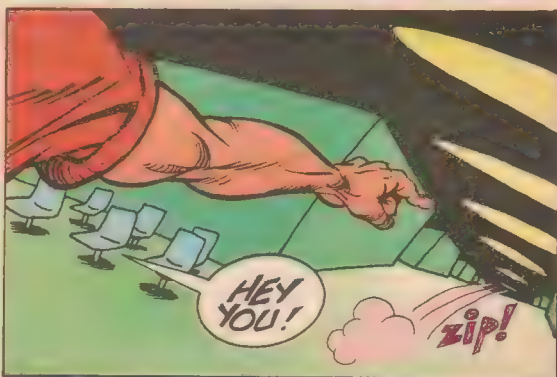


HEY! MY SUITCASE!



HEY YOU!

zip!



COME ON, BADGER. DON'T WANT CHOO TO MISS THAT PLANE, MON!



IT'S LIKE DEJA VU ALL OVER AGAIN!



FIN

Dear LARRY,:

C/O FIRST COMICS
435 N. LASALLE
CHICAGO IL
60610

Dear Buckies,

Owing to a Christine Lavin concert last night (believe it or not, she sang a song called "Castlemagne" in her set), I'm running a little late with letters and the like, so I'll make this quick. Good as it was to see the Wombat, Lamont, and Kid Kang again, I thought Gary Chaloner's exotic style was distracting. Most of the people here were old friends, and we want to recognize old friends right away.

I had no real trouble spotting Ham and Daisy (let Ms. Fields do more — whatever limited exposure she had, she lost, when Mavis became Mrs. Sykes), but the Wombat was horrendous. The chap of *Badger* #15 and *Hexbreaker* was the *real* Wombat: this was sheep in Tasmanian Devil's Food cake clothing!

But, from the punny title of "Emu the Gods Would Destroy" (they first make shaved!) to the challenge of a beer-guzzling contest, *Badger* #58 was a delight. I especially enjoyed the almost appearance of Max Swell, Hermione the Emu, and Gastineau Grover DePaul's rocking R&B salute. *Badger* would be one mean music critic if he weren't a costumed hero. First, horn rock bands in #57, now R&B... how about operas, courtesy of Max? Or Emily's top ten fairy tales? Or slasher movies courtesy of Pierre?

Oh, getting silly, and I don't do it nearly as well as Mike Baron does Waltz Matilda once for me!

Charles Sperling
37-15 Parsons Blvd.
Flushing, NY 11354

Two points: One: when Mike and Gary got together, they decided that the Wombat didn't really look like a true aborigine,



Here's an
advance look at
the work of
Badger's new
regular artist,
Steven Butler.
He starts his magic
next issue.

"Think upon this and reflect: Wouldn't literature be read by more people, if there was a helluva kung fu fight every few chapters?"

and in a fit of revisionist thinking they concocted "Emu the Gods Would Destroy." From now on, the Wombat will appear as Gary depicted him.

Second: Charles responded to our poll for favorite Badger villain, favorite issue, favorite ice cream, and whether you want 20-page stories or 26-page stories. I'll probably be running the poll's results in Badger #61, so this is a reminder: vote early and often.

Dear Badgerites:

Man, "Emu the Gods Would Destroy" was another great piece of modern twentieth-century literature. Racing bison, beer, kung fu, a discussion of the great R&B sides of all time; these are the things classics are made of.

Think upon this and reflect: Wouldn't literature be read by more people, if there was a helluva kung fu fight every few chapters? Have the Brothers Karamazov have a first-fall-loses battle with Miusov, giving the elder Zosima a boot to the head during the monastery discussion. That would liven things up a bit, and maybe the networks would pick it up for a badly acted mini-series.

How about *Bleak House*, the most boring Dickens book in existence? Toss in a few crazed ninjas, a few thousand throwing stars, and then it would be worth reading all those boring courtroom parts.

"As Jarndyce stood to address the venerable, though drunken, judge, he barely had time to clear his throat before the ninjas burst through the overhead skylight, causing great distress among all and sundry, not least of all was Jarndyce who discovered, to his surprise, a throwing star lodged in his forehead. 'Dear me,' he muttered."

See? Now *that's* literature.

Sean Twist
8-290 Springbank Dr.
London, ONT Canada

Wait until you see our new Badger/Classics Illustrated crossover this summer.

Yo,

Hey Bob, how's it goin'? I've been reading *Badger* for about two years now, and have since gotten all of the issues in the series. Now all I need is to find all of his guest appearances (wouldn't happen to know 'em, would ya?). Another little tidbit is I've also turned at least fifteen people on to readin' *Badger*, and they love it!

Since I'm here, I might as well tell ya how I felt about #58. By far, it probably was one of the most interesting stories. It had everything you could ever want: Badger in Australia, Lamont with a great new 'do, Wombat, bar fights, an emu with goggles, and a Mike Baron story to boot. You name it. It had everything but good art.

I couldn't believe it, when we opened the box (I work in a comic shop) there on top was the Badger logo, but the art looked nothing like I was used to. I opened it up, and the art was the same on the inside. Now don't get me wrong, I can't say Gary's art was bad. I take the Don Thompson approach to art (I'm no artist, so I shouldn't say something is bad), but it was the only issue so far that the art did not appeal to me.

The story, however, was excellent, as usual. I'm looking forward to the next issue by Mike and the Pander Bothers, and then #60 by Steve Butler: his art definitely appeals to me.

Oh yeah, Badge isn't a Republican, is he? Please say he isn't. After that quip about Dukakis a few issues back, I'm no longer sure.

Well I gotta git, but I'll be back.

P.S. Thanks for all the good stuff this year, may next year be even better! Happy holidays to everyone at First Comics. You guys (and gals) are the best, and I'm not just saying that either.

Chad Walter
3600 Gull St.
Reno, NV 89506

Badger guest-starred in Nexus #6-8, #45-50, co-starred in Crossroads #2 and #3, and made cameo appearances in Hammer of God #1 and the Nexus Family Portrait poster. He also co-starred in an issue of the Epic comic called Coyote. If I find he's anywhere else, I'll tell you.

As for ol' Badge being affiliated with any political entity, you've got to be kidding!

—Bob Garcia



NEXT ISSUE: A dangerous trio of martial artists arrive in Barneveld to see if Badger can handle a deadly game of "Scissors, Paper, Stone." Part one of two. By **Mike Baron** and **Steve Butler**.



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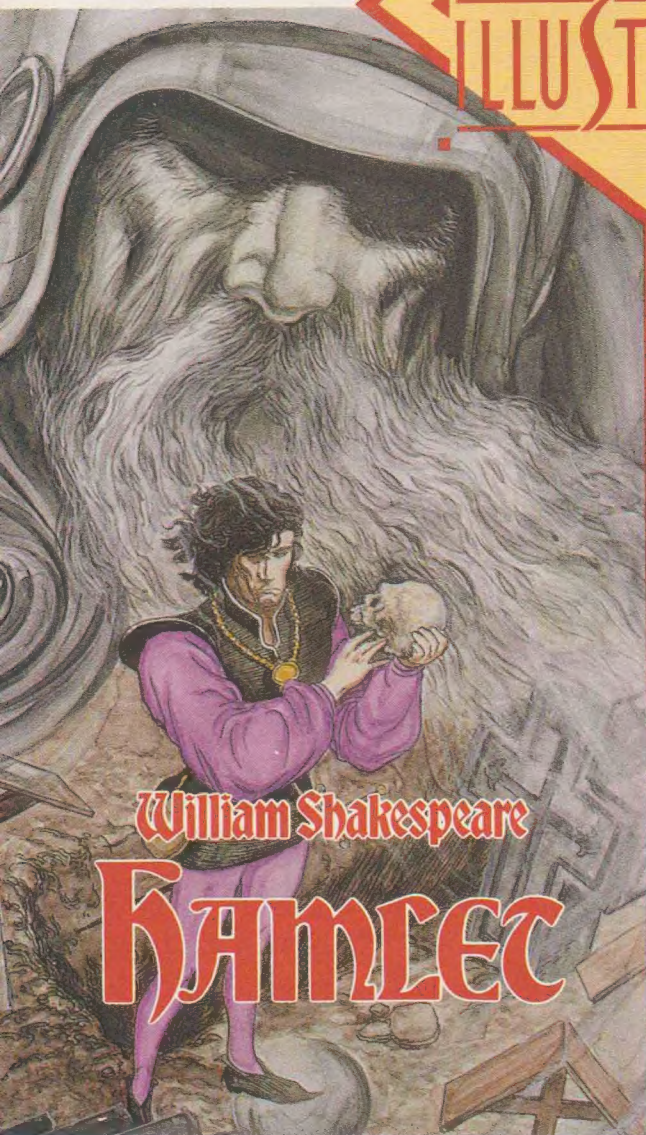
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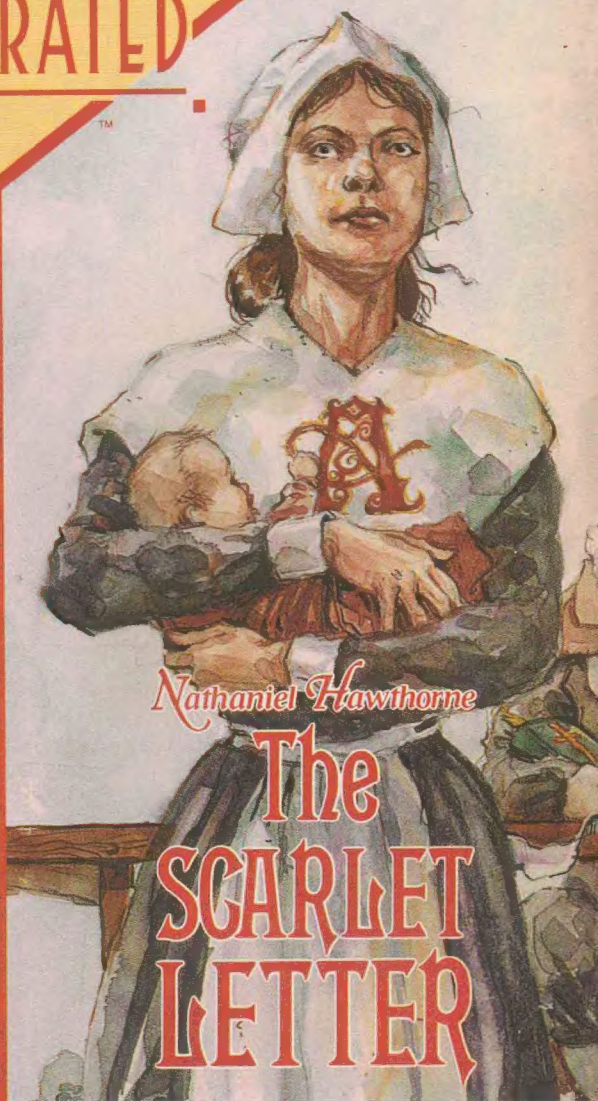


William Shakespeare

HAMLET

Classics Illustrated #5
Hamlet

William Shakespeare's great tragedy of murder and madness.
Adapted by Steven Grant. Illustrated by Tom Mandrake.



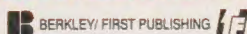
Nathaniel Hawthorne

The SCARLET LETTER

Classics Illustrated #6
The Scarlet Letter

Nathaniel Hawthorne's portrait of the effects of sin.
Adapted by P. Craig Russell. Illustrated by Jill Thompson

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